



GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK. PORTRAIT BY PAUL FOURNIER. MR. VIERECK'S "CONFESSIONS OF A BARBARIAN" IS REVIEWED ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE

Lindau, the well-known author; and her husband is an Englishman, Mr. John Chartres, barrister at law. Her little daughter, Vivien Chartres, whose picture is here shown with her mother, is a musical prodigy who has won fame as a violinist.

We wrote to the publishers of *Nathan Burke*, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue, for some information about the author, Mary S. Watts. They have forwarded us the following letter from Mrs. Watts, which we print without comment:

After two days of profound thought on the subject, I have come to the conclusion that

your letter inquiring for interesting personal experiences is itself perhaps one of the most interesting personal experiences I have had so far! The plain truth is nobody ever had a duller time of it living, or a more commonplace life. I was born (at a date which I refuse to divulge) in that Scioto River country which I have attempted to describe in *Nathan Burke*; the scenery and people are quite faithful and recognisable; and of course, Columbus is the "city." All those descriptions are photographic, too, except in some instances where I was overcome with an unaccountable kind of shyness, and deliberately invented or distorted names and localities. Everybody in the story, however, is imaginary; I am kept busy assuring people of this. They will insist that it is "founded on fact," or that I "knew somebody

like So-and-So," or ask "who Such-a-One was meant for?"

Of course I began to write when I was a youngster, and kept it up in a desultory way until a few years ago, when I went at it in earnest; my experiences were exactly those of every beginner. I wasn't like a lady who recently said to me: "Did *you* have a hard time getting things accepted? Well, that just *shows!* I always have said that I couldn't possibly be a genius, because they *always* take everything I write!" As I've never seen anything she wrote I don't know whether this is an accurate test of a genius or not; it's almost too simple. I might have told her that I still have trouble getting things accepted—which should certainly clinch the argument about genius—but it is impossible to make people believe that. They think all I have to do is to send in a story and get a cheque by return mail.



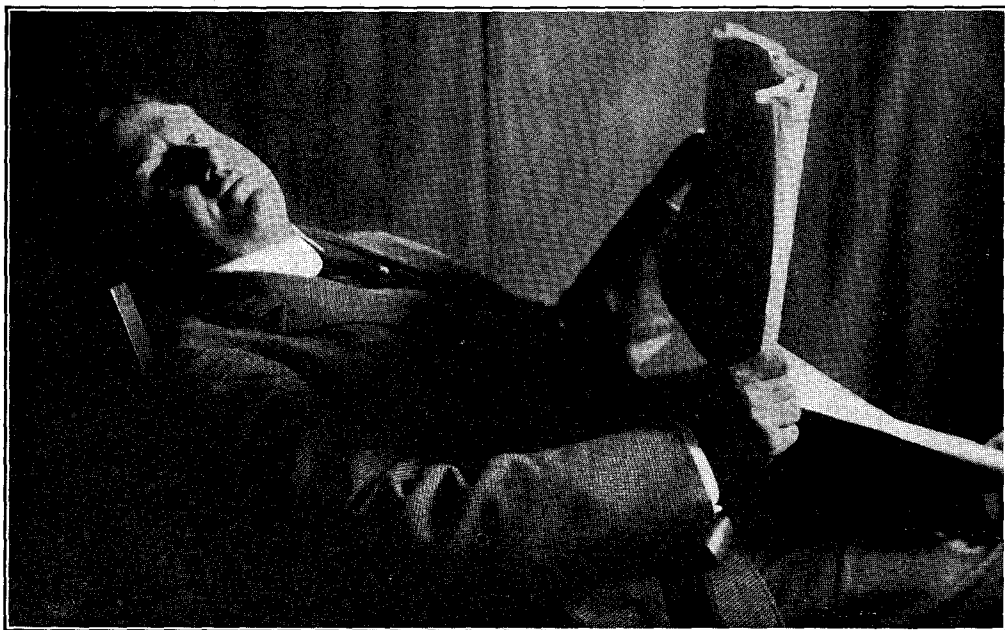
MARY S. WATTS



CHARLES FREDERICK HOLDER, AUTHOR OF "THE CHANNEL ISLANDS OF CALIFORNIA"

The first I ever got into print were two or three short stories; every one enters by that door, I suppose. But the fact is a short story is a *tour de force* with me; my style of writing is not suited to them. And, indeed, "they take a higher degree of study and skill, and much more vigorous inspiration than a long novel." This I was told by a young lady here, upon my remarking on the difficulties I had with short stories; and as she writes short stories herself, she ought to know. These first of mine that appeared naturally created some stir here where I am known; everybody proceeded to thrust greatness upon me, to my infinite distaste. Everybody except one person, that is; she drew me into a corner at a reception to say: "Well, I've read your stories, Mrs. Watts, and I do hope now that you've written these good ones, you're not going to run down. You know all the authors run down; there's So-an-So—" she named him—"isn't it awful how he's run down? I said to Mr. E— (her husband) the other day, 'Well, I do hope Mrs. Watts isn't going to run down like all the rest of them!'"

You might suppose a rising author would be somewhat dashed by opinions like the above. But there are compensations. Not long since I went into a little shop, an antiquity-and-curiosity place—to buy a gift which had to be sent away. I had to ask for a pen and paper to write the address and make a memorandum of my own name and address for the dealer to let me know the express charges; and in the course of these transactions, says I, wishing



O. HENRY'S FAVOURITE PORTRAIT

to be affable: "What nice blotters these are! One can't get them at the stationers—they never have anything but great big sheets that you have to cut into pieces." Whereupon I observed some commotion in the rear of the shop, and presently the proprietor appeared. "Mrs. Watts, isn't it?" "Yes." "Well now, Mrs. Watts, I just want to say, you take all of those blotters you want, and any time you're passing, stop in, and get blotters whenever you need them. Anybody that does all the writing you do, must need blotters!"

However, I grieve to say this generous gentleman has gone into bankruptcy since. The business of supplying blotters free as air to literary celebrities was too much for him. The last person from whom I got a kind word was my dressmaker. She says she's going to read *Nathan Burke*; and I suppose she must be reading it, because she's put me off several times lately. She inquired what time in the day I did my work, volunteering the information that she did all her designing in the evenings—"after the day's work is all over, you know, I wouldn't feel my mind free to create, if I was worrying about it all during my fittings. Sometimes I design a little Sunday, too, if I get an idea. It's best if you get an idea to go right ahead and develop it, don't you think so?" I told her that was exactly the way

I worked, and we looked at each other quite soulfully. *Arcades ambo!*

It is time, I think, to use one of those over-worked blotters.

The very talented writer of short stories, the creator of Jefferson Peters, of "Beelzebub" Blythe, of Johnnie Atwood, of Colonel Telfair, of Jimmie Valentine, of "Shamrock" Clancy, of Willie Robbins, and a score—nay—ten score more—who wrote under the pseudonym of O. Henry, and whose real name was William Sidney Porter, died in New York on the 5th of last month in the forty-fourth year of his age. He had for some time been an exceedingly sick man, but he retained his consciousness to the last. Just before the end came he asked that the curtains of the room be raised. "Because," he whispered with a smile, "I don't want to go home in the dark."

It is somewhat difficult now to appraise Mr. Porter's work in its entirety, or to say what position he will hold twenty years hence. That position, we